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An excellent study by M. Renouvier is to be read in the *Année philosophique* (1894)¹ on the doctrine of St. Paul. The *Année psychologique*² also promises a rich collection.

LUCIEN ARRÉAT.

PARIS, FRANCE.

A FRENCH VIEW OF THE CHICAGO CONGRESSES.

The reports of the various French commissioners sent to Chicago by the government during the exposition of 1893 are now being issued by the Minister of Commerce. One of the most recent to appear is that of M. Louis de Chasseloup-Laubat devoted to the congresses which were held at the time of the Fair. This report is all the more interesting to us because the author confines his attention wholly to the essays, papers, and speeches contributed by our countrymen and women. "My principal aim is," he says, "to furnish a general account of the way in which Americans look at the great questions of the hour now occupying the attention of the best and most learned minds on both sides of the Atlantic." We have, therefore, in this big quarto of four hundred pages a French view of the American side of the Chicago congresses.

M. de Chasseloup-Laubat's descriptions and comments are generally written in a very broad-minded, cosmopolitan, and friendly spirit, though now and then he has not been able to throw off entirely his French prejudices and ideas. This is particularly the case where he has to do with women and their interests. Thus we find this opinion given in the introductory part of his report :

"The most unfortunate and vexatious feature of the organization of the congresses of Chicago was the exaggerated importance given to women. Their participation was, in fact, out of all proportion to the papers and the works sent by persons belonging to

¹F. Alcan, publisher.

²F. Alcan, publisher.

the feebler sex. So also the time spent in listening to the speeches of orators in petticoats did not correspond with the value of these bits of eloquence."

And again in his comments on the Purity Congress :

"One of the reasons why nothing practical resulted from this gathering is that a certain number of very respectable ladies, belonging to various feminine associations opposed to vice, felt called upon to mix up the question of moral purity with woman's rights and to demand the political equality of the two sexes. But these two things have nothing in common. It is hard to see how giving women the ballot would make them more virtuous. As far as I know, politics has not had the tendency to render men more chaste."

M. de Chasseloup-Laubat dismisses the Woman's Congress, which was perhaps, with the single exception of the Parliament of Religions, the most largely attended of the whole series, with a single page, though he devotes over one hundred and thirty pages to the Civil Engineering Congress ! And here is his concluding remark concerning this remarkable gathering : "It is very doubtful if this Congress does much for reforming legislation in a direction favorable to woman."

It would not be difficult to "answer" these criticisms, but this is not the purpose of this article ; and, in fact, M. de Chasseloup-Laubat presents such a different front in a paragraph under the Government and Administration Congress, that he almost disarms counter-criticism. He says :

"It is quite true that there exists no serious reason why women, who have attained their majority, should be deprived of the right to vote. The eligibility of women to legislative functions would, however, be more inconvenient than advantageous because men would consider themselves less bound to respect women if the latter entered into the arena of politics." [The history of the last Colorado Legislature contradicts this statement, I believe.] "But there can be no doubt that dropping a ticket into a ballot-box does not in itself constitute an act opposed to woman's rôle in modern society."

The temperance reformers will find more "bones to pick" with

M. de Chasseloup-Laubat than the woman suffragists, for, in his account of the Temperance Congress, he thus pays his respects to the Prohibitionists :

“It is astonishing that there are to be found in the United States so many fanatics having no sort of respect for the rights of others, who are all the more dangerous because they are so respectable and so convinced of the justice of their cause. . . . The anti-alcoholic monomania sometimes carries them to a point so nearly bordering on folly that one is led to ask if persons afflicted with *delirium tremens* are more wild in their ravings than many of the advocates of prohibition.”

The real reason why M. de Chasseloup-Laubat is so bitter in his denunciation of teetotalers crops out in several places of his report of the Temperance Congress, as where he says : “I felt it to be my duty to combat with the greatest energy a proposal whose realisation would entail each year a loss of millions of francs to the wine growers and sellers of champagne, Bordeaux, and Saintonge.”

Among “the precursors and chiefs of the temperance movement” in the United States he places, along with Father Matthew and John B. Gough, whom he imagines to be still among the living, Lincoln !

He next takes up the religious congresses which are treated very fairly. Here is what he has to say of the Catholic Congress :

“The salient point of these reunions was the confirmation of the fact that Catholicism is now undergoing an evolution in the direction of republican and democratic ideas,—one might almost say towards American ideas. It would seem as if the Papacy, uneasy over political events in Europe, were striving to find a solid support among the most powerful nation of the two Americas. After having compromised itself in the Old World by compromising the political systems with which it believed its destiny indissolubly linked, Catholicism has changed its line of conduct and has discovered that it has a grand future in the New World, where the American branch of the Church is young, enterprising, unhampered by any political past, progressive in its acts and absolutely independent because it lives on its own means,—the voluntary donations of the faithful.

This Catholic evolution is certainly a grand and important fact, one of the capital ones revealed in these Chicago congresses."

"Of all the Chicago congresses," this Report truly says, "the Parliament of Religions attracted the most people and called forth the most comment. One saw displayed there a tolerance and respect for the opinions of others that were really admirable. If we except the sitting in which the ladies indulged in noisy protest at the defence of Mussulmanic polygamy, all opinions and all doctrines were listened to with the deference and kindness that is due earnest people defending moral ideas and exposing their conceptions of the grave problems of life and death. This is certainly an interesting and very remarkable fact, and it proves that the spirit of tolerance exists in the United States. . . . The impression produced in America by this Congress was profound, and will doubtless last for a long time, inculcating still more deeply into the nation a respect for the beliefs and opinions of others. In Europe, the results will probably be much less tangible and of minor importance. . . . The Parliament of Religions rendered a grand service to many people. It showed them that though dogmas and forms are dissimilar, morality, the basis and *raison d'être* of religions, is one; it presented to them under varied, complex, and changing appearances a unique, single, and immutable foundation. A small number of choice spirits long ago discovered this truth. The Parliament of Religions opened the eyes of thousands to it,—and this will be the greatest service to humanity rendered by this Congress."

In closing his very readable and creditable Report, M. de Chasseloup-Laubat writes:

"Whatever may have been said against these congresses through jealousy and ignorance, they were one of the most remarkable manifestations of the human intellect that has ever occurred on American soil,—that gigantic America, which is destined to assume from day to day a more considerable place in the world, in the evolution of civilisation, and in the destinies of the human race."

THEODORE STANTON.

PARIS, FRANCE.